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ABSTRACT

An historical account of the apathy, neglect and mishandling of the archival papers of the State of North Carolina is given and the development of a truly archival agency is described. The subject of the second paper in this series of three papers is the relationship of archives to active record offices in North Carolina. It examines the State's Department of Archives' undertaking as they relate to the active records offices it works with to provide a more complete understanding of the archivists' role. The third paper is concerned with arrangement and accessioning of microfilms, with difficulties encountered in the filming and use of microfilm, and with the costs involved. This report concludes with some general information about storage problems, costs, and guides to materials available on microfilm. (Other papers from this Institute are available as LI 002962 - LI 002972 and LI 002974 through LI 002976). (NH)

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[NORTH CAROLINA STATE ARCHIVES]

By

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Papers prepared for the Institute in Archival Librarianship,
University of Oregon, September 22, 1969 - August 14, 1970

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Report on the State Archives of North Carolina

The history of the keeping of public records in the state of North Carolina from earliest colonial times to the creation of the Department of Archives and History in 1903 has been written in For History's Sake, a book by H.G. Jones, the state archivist. From a long background of apathy, neglect, misuse, mishandling, and a variety of crises, has been built a strongly independent, well-organized and efficient archival agency. The pages of official records in this archival institution now number an estimated 20 million,[1] but this accumulation began with one document, the Carolina Charter, issued by the Crown to the Proprietors on March 24, 1663.

The Proprietors in turn issued to their appointed colonial governor, "Concessions and Agreements," a document which included orders to "keep exact entries in fair books of all public affairs and...record and enter all Grants of Land,"[2] and thus contained the earliest directives for public record keeping. These orders were directed to the provincial secretary, an office appointed separately from that of governor. The secretary's duties required him to keep records of all wills and estates settled, public affairs were to be noted, and surveys of boundaries recorded.

The "Fundamental Constitutions" of 1669 expanded on the original orders, requiring the recording of grants of land and vital statistics with a register in each precinct. Only one such record for that period exists, so the records were either not kept or not preserved. The prime public concern with records was largely limited to land grants, titles and deeds. This concern is reflected in the fact that titles and deeds to land

were registered and recorded, procedures which were not customary in England. In general, of course, policies concerning public records (at least by intent) tended to follow English patterns.

The recording of these transactions did not necessarily mean that the records were then available to the provincial governors and secretaries. These records were vital for establishing tax roles and collecting quit-rents, but were increasingly difficult for the provincial secretary to obtain. Jones seems to hint that the growing difficulty in obtaining these records was due to more than just neglect or irresponsibility on the part of the designated local registrars.[3] How much may have been due to deliberate attempts to evade payment is problematic. At any rate, here is a possible source of an anti-bureaucratic, anti-record keeping tradition, a tradition not just neglectful, but actually opposed to careful preservation of records; a tradition perhaps begun when uncertainty about ownership served the interests of North Carolinians.

In addition to the hazards to public records that were posed by officials who were certainly neglectful, if not purposefully so, or not actually corrupt, were added the problems created by a lack of any fixed seat of government for the colony or many of the precincts. It is uncertain whether there were any public buildings until 1718, hence no permanent facilities for housing public records. This meant that the journals of the General Assembly, which were inaccurately kept anyway, were kept in private hands between sessions, and produced (hopefully) and without alterations (hopefully) when they were required for business. Many of the precinct courts, which began in the 18th century to be responsible for recording real estate transactions, also lacked permanent housing; nevertheless, some

records are extant from dates as early as 1665. Provision for the keeping of religious records was made by the Fundamental Constitutions and import and export duties required records, but all of these records had to endure the hazards of careless keeping, uncertain storage, falsification, fire and war. In 1728, at the end of the proprietary period, there were no executive offices, few courthouses, no newspapers, printing presses, paper mills. Existing records were in the hands of officials or former officials. Jones states that "there existed probably no single complete series of records for the Colony--not even of the laws."[4] Reports and other correspondence sent to England now provide an alternative source of information for the period; in some instances the only remaining records relating to certain early periods are those sent to the Lords Proprietors.

The inability of the Lords Proprietors to collect their quitrents probably had a hand in their willingness to sell their rights to the Crown, but difficulties in collection of quitrents and taxes continued under the royal governors. At the time the Crown took over the government in 1729, "there was no accurate rent roll indicating the names of landholders and the acreage on which rents were due."[5] There was still no satisfactory register of real estate ownership at the outbreak of the Revolution, there were no treasurers' accounts and no registration of births and deaths. It is not hard to see why difficulties of collection did not abate, or to see why government officials are quick to see the importance of preserving public records.

In 1736, the royal governor complained that no complete copy of the laws existed. The first printer was lured to the colony with the promise of government business, revision of the laws was begun, and the first set of

North Carolina laws to be compiled, was printed by 1751. This was not the end of confusion regarding the laws however, as it was the custom to send the original of an act to the printer. This practice was not stopped until 1787. One wonders if, during that time, the printers ever did any unofficial legislation by editing the copy.

Throughout this period, the lack of a permanent seat of government was a continuing problem for the preservation of records. Finally, in 1771, New Bern was designated the capital, and a fine new governor's palace itself provided space for the land records, with other records stored elsewhere in that city. This home was to be only for a short time, however.

The break with England had several repercussions for the archives of North Carolina. Records obviously no longer had to be sent to England, so that source of information for the researcher was eliminated. From 1774 to 1776 the government of North Carolina was sketchy, office holders, and hence their records, feeling the lack of a single executive. By the time of the Declaration of Independence, there was concern for the safety of the state's archives, and their odyssey began. Jones suggests that "evidence is insufficient to determine in many instances just what records were involved in the transfer of the government from one place to another, but a casual reader might be led to think that they remained aboard wagons and carts for much of the war."[6] From 1774 to 1781, the assemblies of North Carolina met in four different places a total of 15 times, while the Provincial Council (which was providing executive leadership) and the Committees of Safety were meeting in still different places. These moves were not by any means because of necessities of war, but apparently at the whim of the legislatures. In the summer before Cornwallis' surrender at

Yorktown there was some real military danger, resulting in further scattering of the archives across the North Carolina landscape. At war's end, there was yet no rush to find a permanent home for the government or its archives. Agreement on a location could not be reached, and the legislature, the executive, and the archives continued their travels. In 1788, the convention to ratify the United States Constitution also set the location of the capital as "within 10 miles of Isaac Hunter's plantation"[7] but the Raleigh site was not specified by the legislature until 1792, with the archives and the legislature finally arriving there in 1794.

Problems for the state records from then until the Civil War were less dramatic. The papers of both houses of the legislature were stored together and gradually became mixed, but there were no major losses. Even when the state house burned in 1831, relatively few records were destroyed. The archives were then located in a fire-procf out-building, but even current records stored in the state house were rescued. In 1840 a new building was completed, which housed all public records of the state government. In addition legislation was passed about that time which required the preservation of the state financial records, the original papers of the legislature, the governors' papers and the land grant books; responsibility for preservation of these records was given to the state librarian.

The Civil War and its aftermath resulted in the single greatest loss of North Carolina archival materials. First the records were removed from the path of Sherman's army. This retreat, at war's end, by a government in shock and defeat, was much less orderly and more costly in terms of losses than all the peregrinations of the Revolutionary era. But the risks to a defeated government's archives don't end with the end of hostilities. There

was great reluctance to return the records to the scrutiny and control of the Union Army. Losses were substantial; in many cases it is not known whether these occurred during the war or the era of Reconstruction. Some found their way to Washington, D.C.; the governor's letter books were not returned for 97 years. Jurisdiction of the archives reverted to the secretary of state under the new constitution; treatment of them was largely apathetic. From time to time, conscientious historically-minded individuals entered the scene and surprisingly complete records were recovered and restored. Sometimes the search was deliberate; sometimes the discovery was serendipitous.

A growing concern about preservation of North Carolina's historical documents led to some moves in the direction of an archival institution. In 1887 the state librarian was reassigned the responsibility for the legislative records, and in 1893, the state records to 1790 were published. There was no central archives as yet however, and no central directing force. State historical societies created by the legislature in 1875 and 1893 failed to meet the need for an archives. One disappeared, while the North Carolina Historical Association, without legal sanction, evolved into a private historical society.[8] This society was instrumental in the passage of legislation establishing an historical commission in 1903. Ruled by an executive board appointed by the governor, the North Carolina Historical Commission began with an annual budget of $500. Its duties were the "collection and printing of valuable documents pertaining to the history of the State."[9]

In 1907 the activities of the commission were expanded. Development of a truly archival agency stems from this time. State, county, and municipal officials were enabled to turn over all records, documents, etc.,

not in current use. Erection of historical markers, encouragement of the teaching of North Carolina history in the public schools and stimulation of historical research were additional duties of the commission. The budget was raised to $5,000. Legislation through the years continued the expansion of the spheres of activity of the Historical Commission. Additional functions included supervision of museums and historic sites, newspaper microfilming, and most importantly, in records management.

While earlier legislation had enabled state and local agencies to turn over records not in current use, in 1935 an act was passed which required the authorization of the Historical Commission before records could be destroyed. At this time, the commission also received authorization to examine current records, offering advice as to their management of these records, suggesting provisions for preservation and filing. Lack of funds made immediate implementation impossible, but in 1939 "when staff noticed in the newspaper"[10] (this seems a remarkably inefficient way for an agency to be informed of activities in its sphere of interest) that funds had been allocated for storage of the North Carolina Relief Administration records, the commission moved to take charge of those records, the funds, and the storage area made availabe for them. From that time, the commission took an increasingly active part in the management of current records, as recognition of the value of their services increased. Lack of funds still prevented systematic control.

A law revision in 1945 changed the name of the commission to the Department of Archives and History, emphasizing its archival functions. In addition, this legislation granted the department legal authority for a records management program. The department was to review records of state,

county and local agencies, destroy outdated records if not valuable, preserve them if of permanent value, and to microfilm if practicable. A records center was completed in 1953, offering space for the records of state agencies. Microfilm copies were made legal equivalents to originals so this part of the department's activities grew.

Growth since the establishment of the commission in 1903 has been continuous, if not always smooth. Some problems recur--lack of funds lurking somewhere in the back of most of these--in the biennial reports. Insufficient financial backing limits space available for storage, the systematization of records management, and the numbers of trained personnel available for arrangement and description of accessions. Some problems are novel. In 1957, the legislature passed an act directing a separate governmental division to establish records centers. The state archivist pointed out that such an agency was already in existence, and turned what might have been a fragmentation of duties into legislation for even stronger records management on the part of the Department of Archives and History. State agencies were required to work with the department in the preparation of inventories of records and schedules for preservation, disposal or transfer of noncurrent records to the state archives. (Apparently the legislature acted on the recommendation of a special commission whose purpose was to increase efficiency in the state government. This commission had efficiently noted the desirability of a program of records management, but had inefficiently failed to notice that such a program already existed.) How much has been accomplished under these acts will be seen in a look at the current status of the North Carolina Department of Archives and History.

Comparison of the budgets of 1903 and 1966, ($500 to $1 million) gives an idea of the magnitude of change since the founding of the archival agency. Control of policy, however, is still vested in an executive board, appointed by the governor to staggered 6-year terms. Historic sites, museums, and publications are still separate divisions of the department, in addition to the division of Archives and Manuscripts which is the concern of this report. The other three divisions are more visible--to the governor, the legislature and the public--and one wonders of this is a factor in the successful funding of the department. The director, directly accountable to the executive board, and a career(not a political) appointee, is in a position to coordinate the activities of all four divisions, to manipulate them in ways to maximize his department's effectiveness.

The archives division had 56 full-time employees in 1968 with an annual budget of $455,000. Jones suggests that this possibly is more than is spent for this purpose by any other state.[11] Organization of the division is into the state archives, the state and local records sections, two special projects and two laboratories.

The state archives is the final repository for all permanently valuable public records of the executive, legislative and judicial branches of state, county and municipal agencies. In addition there is an interest in the collection of private manuscripts, account books, genealogical materials, newspapers, church records, organization and institution records, maps and copies of historical materials in other repositories. The early policy of the Historical Commission to secure copies of materials in other archives that are of historical interest to North Carolina has been

continued. Copies of English colonial records pertaining to North Carolina can be found in the archives. Copying was begun on Spanish archival materials bearing on North Carolina. This was halted once by a lack of funds, then stopped before completion by order of the Spanish king. The systematic collection of maps relating to North CArolina and a collection of original or photostatic copies of pre-19th century newspapers are additional materials collected.

None of these collections are ends in themselves. Preservation of unique materials is for the benefit of those who will make use of them, and Jones suggests the need for balancing the two main functions of the state archives.[12] Neither the needs of researchers or the arrangement and description of records can be allowed to monopolize the time of the staff, if the quality of the work is to be maintained. Preparation and publication of guides to particular subject areas or types of records is an auxiliary and valuable function of the division. Ernst Posner, writing in American State Archives, stated regarding the North Carolina state archives that "Arrangement and description of the holdings have suffered from rapid intake and lack of personnel available for these functions."[13] In 1968, the department was itself reporting that "the large accumulation of records awaiting attention continues to grow."[14] Success in collection creates its own problems.

The local records section's primary concern is with records management for county and municipal governments. This section prepares inventories of holdings, and schedules the records of local governments for ultimate disposal, whether that is destruction or eventual transfer to the

state archives. At the time of the 1966-68 biennial report, a program of microfilming county records judged to be of permanent value was the most important project of this section. A systematic plan for handling this project was worked out, including a system of recording valuable church and municipal records when a county's records are being done. As records are inventoried and microfilmed, historically valuable records are transferred to the state archives, where they must be appraised, arranged and described. These records form a valuable part of the archives. In 1943, the county records were considered the "most used and most significant of the archival materials."[15] The guiding principle behind the gathering of county records in Raleigh, is that records from 100 distinct counties are of more value to scholars when gathered under one roof.

A number of counties also microfilm important current records, the films then being sent to the archives for security purposes. An additional function of the local records section is to serve as a sort of "consumers' union" to the various new processes and equipment being offered for sale. A records management analyst is employed to help local officials with their current records management problems, including this one.

The agency that manages state records and arranges transfer of state records to the archives is the state records section. Here the focus for 1966-68 was the revision of schedules of disposal for the records of various departments and agencies. Factors necessitating such revisions included alterations in departmental structure, additions of new sections or new functions to old agencies, and reviews of administrative needs

which changed retention requirements. The rapid multiplication of paper work was of increasing concern to various agencies; they sought help from records management analysts in the development of records systems.

The state records section was also involved in a microfilming project, that of microfilming the records of state agencies. All this microfilm was processed and duplicated (where necessary) by the microfilm processing laboratory. A laborious task that must be carried out for all microfilm, is a proofreading to be sure that legibility and durability meet the requirements for long-term preservation.

The second laboratory is concerned with the restoration and performance of preventive maintenance on valuable documents. Work here is coordinated with the reviewing and microfilming of county records, to repair those in need. The process used is one of deacidification and lamination.

Two additional projects round out the sphere of interests of the Archives and Manuscripts division. The Civil War Roster project at the National Archives in Washington D.C. is engaged in compiling data on North Carolinians who served in the Civil War. The newspaper microfilming project locates, microfilms and compiles a union list of all pre-1900 North Carolina newspapers, still extant but now defunct.

In 1943, on the occasion of its 40th anniversary, the North Carolina Historical Commission published in an appendix to its Bulletin no. 43, a list of its holdings. This included the legislative papers from 1689 to 1900. Records of the governors and other executive officers are listed, as are the judicial records that are held. There were 5,000 volumes and boxes of county archival materials; for each listing, the predecessor of the

current county name is also indicated. Copies of United States and foreign records are described, and a partial listing of manuscript collections is given. The map and newspaper collections are inventoried.

A second appendix provides a list of the Commission's publications to that date, an imposing list and an outstanding achievement. By now, 26 years later, this list includes 38 volumes of colonial and state records, plus materials from private sources. Thirty volumes of the quarterly North Carolina Historical Review have been published.

This custom of listing accessions and publications in the biennial reports continues, so that an idea of the scope of the department can be gained by scanning these bulletins. In 1968, the publication division's current "best sellers" were two sets of facsimile reproductions of, respectively, selected maps and documents. These were money-makers; the publications section showed a profit of $11,000.[16]

The preservation of the state's public records is much more secure than was true in the more distant past. The concern of some public-minded citizens, historians and professional (or amateur, as Condon called himself[16]) archivists, more workable governmental backing and funding, systematic planning based on archival principles, and new techniques of safeguarding (microfilming, laminating) lie behind this improvement.

However, problems of space requirements seem to hang permanently over the heads of archivists. The problem is shared by all state and local agencies in North Carolina and is an incentive for them to cooperate with the State Department of Archives in areas of record management and

transfer of records. That space needs form a continuing problem is attested to by the 1966-68 Biennial Report. In 1968, a new $4 million building to house the department and the state library was nearing completion. The report predicts that the new storage facilities will be filled within two years. The suggestion is made that a new state library building should be built, with the archives then being able to claim all of the new building, and, these proposals are being made before the building is occupied by either.

Footnotes

1. H.G. Jones, For History's Sake, p. xv.

2. Jones, p.6.

3. Jones, p.4.

4. Jones, p.22.

5. H.T. Lefler, North Carolina, p. 143.

6. Jones, p.34.

7. Jones, p. 66.

8. Jones, p.

9. North Carolina Historical Commission Bulletin no.1. p.4.

10. Blackwelder, Fannie Memorie, "The North Carolina Records Management Program," in North Carolina Historical Review, July 1959, v36, p341.

11. North Carolina Dept. of Archives and History 32nd Biennial Report, p.11.

12. 32 Biennial Report, p 7.

13. Posner, Ernst, American State Archives, p. 207.

14. 32nd Biennial Report, p. 18.

15. 32nd Biennial Report, p.76.

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Archives Seminar
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North Carolina
Relationship of Archives to Active Record Offices

As one of the more fully implemented state historical-archival programs in this country, North Carolina's Department of Archives and History has established itself firmly in the role of helpmate to the state and county records offices it serves. An examination of the department's undertakings as they relate to the active records offices it works with should prove valuable for a more complete understanding of the archivist's role.

Initially, in establishing the support and cooperation of state and local agencies, the department's chief attraction proved to be in providing a place simply to dump old records. Through the years the department has gradually come to lend a hand in the very creation of these records, moving towards the ideal of "records management." As defined by Philip Brooks, in Public Records Management, "records management" is the conscious care from the first use of records to their final disposal or retirement." (p.3) The word conscious deserves stress. "Conscious care" implies awareness of the human purposes to be served by the records and an attempt to efficiently meet those purposes.

Brooks' goals of good management include economy, efficient retrieval of information, elimination of "piles of old paper," and the meeting of future needs [for the information in the records.] (p.1) These goals are met through control of creation, effective handling, wise selection for retention or disposal, retirement (by transfer to intermediate storage, archives, or disposal,) and the effective archival administration of those retained. (p.3) The archivist receives legal custody of records only when they are transferred to

the archives. Why then has he become interested in records before they reach his custody?

In at least a third of North Carolina's counties, there have been serious losses of records from "fire, steam, water, vermin, theft, improper temperatures and humidity, inferior paper and ink, illegal custody, enemy forces, and natural deterioration," according to H.G. Jones.[1] Here, obviously, is one reason for the archivist's concern--the physical condition and safety of the records.

To insure that records will be useful for research, the archivist strives for certain standards in record keeping. He seeks to avoid an accumulation of unnecessary materials in records. "Trash" that goes into records as they are created, remains there to plague whoever uses, accessions, or houses those records at any future time. Additionally, records can be arranged from their inception in such a manner that data which is only temporarily important, can be more easily extracted from data that is of permanent value. The most efficient time to eliminate unnecessary clutter is at the inception of record keeping.

Still another reason for the archivist's interest in active records is exemplified by an event in North Carolina's past. For a time the papers of both houses of the legislature were stored together; gradually but irretrievably they were mixed. Today in the North Carolina state archives, those papers remain interfiled. The archivist can prevent such an occurrence; once provenance is lost, he must live with the results.

At what points in their existence is the archivist concerned with the keeping of active records? At creation, he is concerned with the inclusion of all important information, the elimination of trash (or the easy or automatic

weeding of it) and assurance that physical longevity will meet requirements for their use. During their maintenance, he wants to be sure records will be kept in a manner that guarantees integrity, provenance and physical security. At their final disposition, he wants to be sure that permanently valuable records will be turned over to the archives.

Clearly then, a rational records management program should be the goal of any historical-archival program. Exactly how far this ideal is from attainment in North Carolina or any other forward-looking state historical-archival agency is difficult to ascertain. The department's accomplishments as seen by John A. McMahon, a county commissioner in North Carolina and ardent supporter of the department, were listed as:

> 1. First, there is the records disposal program.
> 2. Second, there is the microfilming program.
> 3. Third, there is the records management program...a records management program to apply efficient and economical management methods to the creation, utilization, maintenance, retention, preservation and disposal of official records.[2]

In summing up his evaluation of the department's county records program, McMahon remarks that the county official "sees help that is not available anywhere else. He sees sound and practical advice on a wide range of problems. He sees an attitude of cooperation emanating from the State Department of Archives and History, with an insistence that decisions be made by the local official and not by Department personnel--and this gives him confidence in the Department."[3] In other words, as viewed and utilized by the various state and local agencies it works with, the department is still primarily the place to get rid of old, unwanted agency records, but the newer departmental services are utilized and appreciated.

H.G. Jones, North Carolina state archivist, viewing the function of his

department's local records program, summed it up as "designed to control the growth of records, provide adequate storage facilities for records, and insure the disposal of useless records while assuring the preservation of those of permanent value."[4] Even in the benevolent atmosphere of North Carolina with its strong historical tradition the archivist is still struggling to implement a complete records management program. Too often he is still coming in at the end of the records' lives before "trash heap, mice, fire, or human whims destroy them."[5] Certainly this has been the history of the development of North Carolina's records management program in its actual involvement with active records offices and in its legislative evolvement.

The earliest legislation, in 1907, allowed public officials to turn over inactive records to the archives. With this enabling act, the archives actively sought county as well as state records, but on a limited basis. Legislation in 1935 required the approval of the Historical Commission (as the Department of Archives and History was then called) before any public records could be destroyed and gave the commission power of inspection of records in offices. No action could be taken without funds, however, and not until 1939 were any funds made available. At that time the legislature set aside funds and a building to store records of the North Carolina Emergency Relief Administration. The commission promptly stepped in to take charge of funds, building, and the records. If this opportunity had been missed, the North Carolina archives might never have reached the degree of control it now has over active record offices in the state. 1945 legislation increased the stature and authority of the Historical Commission (at this time it became the Department of Archives and History.) Already recognized as a keeper of semi-current records, the department was in a position to enlarge its sphere of activities. The department

urged the building of a State Records Center, which was completed in 1951. Agencies could utilize this new storage facility only by cooperating with the department in its carefully worked out program. At no time were the state agencies simply allotted space in the center for their own purposes. In this way, the department forged a link with the records while still in the agencies.

In 1957 the department was briefly in danger of losing control of records management. That year legislation established a General Services Division, which was required to set up and operate records centers. The state archivist quickly pointed out what the legislature had apparently overlooked--his department's activities in this area, and the Records Center building at the corner of West Lane and North McDowell Streets in Raleigh. His arguments in favor of enlarging this function bore fruit. In 1959 the department's records management functions, in so far as these were concerned with state agencies, were made mandatory. As the final step to to total involvement, from the inception of records to their final desposition, legislation in 1961 made control over the creation of records a mandatory activity of the department.

This single control of both archives and records management follows a long-standing philosophy in North Carolina that "both records administration and archives are part of a larger whole and administratively should not be divided."[6] There would seem to be some cogent arguments for such a unification of administration, perhaps foremost of which is the need for a sense of historical significance of records, which is ingrained in the archivist but would be all too frequently absent in a records manager oriented simply towards efficient use of current records and reduction of bulk.

This of course is not the only pattern of archival-records management relationship followed by American state governments. In 1961, 18 states had

no provision for records management, while responsibility was vested in independent archival agencies in 11, under the jurisdiction of the state library in two, under a fiscal agency in 14, while responsibility was divided among two organizations in the remaining two states.[7]

Ernst Posner, in American State Archives, very properly points out that "assignment of records management responsibility to an archival or other agency of the state, however, does not necessarily mean that a program is actually under way." (p.338) The chronicle of North Carolina's legislation concerning archives and records management exemplifies the direction in which the archival interest in active records has grown--back through the life of records. While North Carolina's records management program is clearly "under way," not every promise of the legislation has been filled as yet. Implementation has taken two distinct directions--one to cover state agencies and the other to meet the needs of local record offices.

The state records section inventories and schedules records of state agencies for transfer to semi-current status at the Records Center. Revision of retention schedules is a continuing process, as agenciy functions and record uses change. Records are considered semi-current when the agency refers to them at a rate of twice per cubic foot per month or less. A manual of transfer procedures has been published to help the agencies make the transfer. The agencies have good access by phone, messenger, or in person to records at the center. By executive order, each agency appoints a records officer to cooperate with the state records section of the Department of Archives. These officers work with two records management analysts employed by the section. The analysts develop and implement new systems of record keeping and filing to increase efficiency of record programs in the state.

The local records section has been involved in a systematic program of inventorying, scheduling, microfilming and restoring county records. Beginning with an inventory, records are scheduled for eventual disposal, permanent preservation in the creating office, or for eventual transfer to the archives, with microfilming of valuable records done at the completion of a county's inventory. One full time records management analyst is employed by the section.

Certainly, the legal basis under which records management functions within a state provides only the underpinning of the relationship between the archives and active record-creating agencies. The quality of the relationship that the archivist maintains with active agencies directly, or through the aegis of a separate records management agency, can be either cooperative and supportive or conflicting and hostile. The archivist must bear in mind the very real possibility that agency personnel exhibit a possessiveness towards "their records". Also, many local officials will zealously guard against encroachment by an overpowering state agency.

The procedure for dealing with local officials in the execution of the department's inventory and microfilming segment of its program, show the length the North Carolina Department of Archives goes to to avoid offending local officials. "Before entering a county, permission is obtained from the Board of County Commissioners, after a letter (and sometimes a conference) setting forth the plans for that particular county."[8] Only after obtaining this approval does the assistant state archivist and his camera crew set about inventorying, scheduling and filming that county's records.

Transfer of the historically significant records whichaare of no further administrative value to the county is encouraged but not made manditory.

Such subtle persuasion as pointing out the "county's role in the history of the state will be more adequately and frequently told if its early records are in the State Archives"[9] may be applied along with security microfilming and free repair of the county's deteriorating records deemed of lasting value.

A number of factors lead to good cooperation. Tact on the part of the archivist should be listed as first and foremost; surprising difficulties can be ironed out through satisfactory interpersonal relationships. A high level of authority is certainly important, not so that legal coercion can be applied, but because an approach made with the backing of legislation or executive order can be done confidently, cheerfully, and very often, persuasively. The best kind of quthority the state archivist can have comes from a staff, rather than a line, position. If he has direct legal responsibility for all agencies' records, he is much better able to secure valuable materials from all agencies. If his is a line position, his authority is only as good as the authority of the agency in which he is located. North Carolina's Department of Archives and History has benefited from its independence from either legislative or executive branches.

Probably, even in lieu of a legal mandate, suggestion for records management that are offered in print would help lend an official air. North Carolina's publications include a Records Management Handbook, County Records Manual, Municipal Records Manual, pamphlets describing the department's activities and services, instructions for filing, and instructions for preparing records for transfer to the archives. These have received an enthusiastic welcome by county officials and agency heads.

Certain practical considerations lead to good, cooperative relationships between state archivists and the various active record agencies. The massive (and still growing) volumes of paper work lead agency officials to recognize their need for expertise in the sphere of records management. An astute archival agency can capitalize on this need for help, promising a reduction in volume. The archivist can help weed out unnecessary records, take permanently valuable but no longer current records, creating usable space for agencies. The archival agency also offers increased safety for essential records. Security microfilming of current records is attractive to small North Carolina counties which could not afford the necessary equipment to do it themselves. With the good relationship established, the county records officers have become the archivist's best lobbyists.

An account of that good relationship, from the point of view of a county official has been given by John McMahon. He tells of his view of records management as a program whereby the state provides assistance to counties in meeting their problems of record keeping. McMahon suggests that success of the program is due to a tradition of state-local cooperation, but cites particularly the tact with which the Department of Archives and History has carried out its responsibilities. He outlines their methods:

> Had our State Archivist too enthusiastically entered courthouses looking for records, we would not be where we are today. But by being available to help when help was needed, by relying on giving advice rather than on giving directions, the Department won the confidence of county officials. And by calling on local officials to help in developing the advice that was given, the Department was able to give advice that had the flavor of commonsense and practicality that made it readily acceptable.[10]

So successful had been the department's tactful approach, that McMahon

relates that when he first saw the title of the paper he was to prepare for the Society of American Archivists, "A County Official Looks at a State-Supervised County Records Program," it was with amazement that he realized that the program was indeed state-supervised. He has viewed it as a state-assistance program. Here, surely, is the ideal working relationship between archival agency and active record office.

Footnotes

1. Jones, H.G., "North Carolina's Local Records Program," American Archivist, v.24, (Jan 1969), 25.

2. McMahon, John A., "A County Official Looks at a State-Supervised County Records Program," in American Archivist, v.25 (April 1962), 212.

3. McMahon, p.218.

4. Jones, p.41.

5. Blackwelder, Fannie M., "The North Carolina Records Management Program," in North Carolina Historical Review, v.36, (July 1959), p.340.

6. North Carolina Historical Commission, General Information, (1911), p.19, as quoted in Ernst Posner's American State Archives, p.208.

7. Jones, H.G., State-Archival Records Management in the United States, Archivum, v.10, (1961), p.136.

8. Jones, AA, p.37.

9. Jones, AA, p.38.

10. McMahon, p.214.

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North Carolina's Department of Archives and Manuscripts uses microfilm in two separate projects. One is the recording of county records for security purposes and to provide research copies of historically valuable materials, especially when the original records are retained in the counties. The other project is a program of filming all North Carolina newspapers (to 1950) which are no longer published and not elsewhere recorded on microfilm.

This report is concerned with arrangement and accessioning of these microfilms, with difficulties encountered in the filming and use of microfilm, and with the costs involved. Not all practical problems encountered by archival institutions in their use of microfilm can be covered adequately by using North Carolina as an example, nor is information on North Carolina's descriptive practices available in detail. Therefore, this report will conclude with some general information about storage problems, costs, and guides to materials available on microfilm.

To film the county records, the North Carolina Department of Archives and History has kept two teams of cameramen at work for ten years. This filming is done by sending the teams and equipment to the counties, after a preliminary inventory decides which records should be filmed. No information is available on particular problems encountered, but the cost of filming (including the inventories, necessary repairs or lamination before filming) is more than $100,000 per year. This project is largely limited to records in bound volumes. Positive copies of the resulting negatives are made only of those records considered valuable for research purposes.

Work on the newspaper microfilming project began in 1959 and has resulted in 1800 reels of microfilm containing 885 newspaper titles. The filming

pattern usually followed is to take the newspapers to the project offices for collation, repairs (when necessary) and filming. Moving bulky, heavy volumes of newspapers is a tedious and physically trying task, according to a recent report by two staff members.[2]

Underlying the painstaking work of preparing the newspapers for filming is the inevitable and unchangeable physical arrangement of microfilm, that unyielding beginning-to-end arrangement that can be avoided only by changing the form (as by use of microfiche). It cannot be emphasized too strongly that the internal arrangement of each reel is permanently determined at the time of filming, unless costly splicing is used. In the case of the North Carolina newspaper project, splicing poses no problem other than cost. For records which may be required as evidence, splicing poses legal proglems. Such records require an operator's certificate and signature to be valid as evidence, and splicing raises doubts about authenticity.

The natural chronological arrangement of newspapers, and their length makes them well-suited to microfilm requirements. The goal in North Carolina is to make this chronological arrangement as complete and as nearly perfect as possible. To accomplish this, the local holdings were checked first, and notes made of all flaws--tears, cuts, and yellowing pages. Issues that were missing or in poor condition were requested from more distant libraries and filming was delayed until the desired arrangement was possible. When microfilm was supplied instead, this had to be spliced. In many cases new orders had to be sent, when film arrived that did not conform to standards of density, image position, or when films proved illegible. Despite this attempt at producing a perfect chronological order, inevitably, new finds have made additional filming necessary. When splicing is not practical, these additions have been recorded on miscellaneous reels, with a record kept of additions.

To insure readable copies, a good deal of cleaning, pressing, and mending had to be done. Sometimes lamination was required. At first, the filming of two pages at a time was attempted as an economy measure. The resulting print was too fine for good readability, so filming was changed to one page per image, with the print perpendicular to the film edge. Economy cannot override the production of a readable film. A second change in procedure eliminated a short history of publication that had preceded each newspaper title. Preceding information now includes only date and place of publication with the title and present location of the originals that were filmed.

After processing, each film has to be checked individually for errors. These errors arise from numerous causes. Faded, yellowed papers don't photograph well and may be illegible. Camera lighting may have been incorrect, since room lighting may vary, and lighting used may not be suitable for particular papers being filmed. Two pages may inadvertently have been turned together or the newspapers not filmed in proper sequence. There is also a chance of light-damaged film, scratches on film, or distorted images. Any of these may necessitate refilming.

This inspection of each frame is a laborious and costly process, but in North Carolina, as elsewhere, is considered essential. If material is important enough to warrant the expense of microfilming, then it is important enough to warrant a check to be sure the filming was correctly done. The Army Technical Manual on microfilming of records points out that the overall percentage of microfilming errors may be small, but errors are likely to occur together, rather than be spread evenly through a large number of reels. Losses of certain series might be complete. And in many cases, the loss of

a single important page may be crucial. In 1966-68, the North Carolina newspaper project refilmed over 125 reels, though not all of this was necessary because of filming errors. In some cases refilming was done because significant numbers of missing issues were found, and refilming is more desirable, and even more economical, than splicing. No information is available as to how much of the refilming was required to correct faulty filming.

After a check of each page has brought any errors to light and these have been corrected, copies are made for research purposes. Formerly, these were positive copies, but recently a direct duplicating film has been used; this produces a negative copy. Full scale prints can be produced from this negative copy which could not be produced from microfilm positives. The department reports that this causes problems for researchers, who express difficulty in reading the negative microfilm.

This points up a recurring problem in the use of microfilm--the eyestrain resulting from its use. In North Carolina, as elsewhere, this is a frequently expressed complaint, despite an experiment[3] which showed no measurable fatigue from six hours of reading from microfilm. The readers who participated in the experiment subjectively reported fatigue, but equipment used to test their physical response did not. Additional complaints from users of microfilm include objections to the inclusion of the index to a work on the same reel as the work itself, difficulty in locating any exact place on a reel, and a general dislike of a format that makes quick reference checking and comparisons so tedious, time-consuming, and even impossible.

In North Carolina, as film returns from the original processing, a reel number is spliced into the master negative. With inspection completed, the film is ready for accessioning.

Accessioning of microfilm follows the same pattern as accessioning of other materials, with a few additional notes explaining that the form is microfilm and noting film size and length. Each entry is made in an Accessions Book. A microfilm catalog card is typed which includes date (or inclusive dates) of the information on the reel, rather than the date of compilation. For newspapers the informational date coincides with date of publication, but in the case of other microfilmed documents, dates of compilation and dates covered on the film may not be at all close.

The main entry used on a card is the subject under which it will be most readily found. In the case of newspapers, this is the newspaper title. A description of the film's contents and a source note follow. Source notes are important for microfilm use, as these give the location of the original records, date of filming and the source of the film. Quantity notes describe number of reels or feet, and whether negative or positive, or both. Negatives which are located elsewhere are noted, though not accessioned. Any other pertinent information, such as copyright or use limitation, is included on the card. Perhaps this is more understandable if seen as it appears:

Date- Reel Number(s)
Date MAIN ENTRY. Any necessary sub-divisions, sections, series, sub-series, etc.
Title paragraph. Any necessary amplification of contents, dates, etc.

Source note. Includes who filmed, date, disposition of original, schedule reference, etc.
Quantity note.
Additional notes. Accessioning date, copying or research limitations, etc., in separate paragraphs.

The microfilm number recorded on the top line is derived from code letters and numbers identifying the source (state agencies, counties, newspapers) and source location, plus reel number(s) and a letter indicating whether the reel contains positive or negative film. Film is stored in labeled boxes.

The Archives Manual clearly states (p4) that:

> It should be remembered that the microfilm card index is a shelf-list or inventory of microfilm by agency or record group and NOT a finding aid to the records on these films. Finding aids should be prepared for all microfilms accessioned, without regard to the format of these records except for references to size, quantity, and film number.

The meaning of this statement is not perfectly clear from a "cold" reading. Certainly additional finding aids would be desirable, and more so for other records on microfilm than for the newspapers. However, the filing of these cards by main entry, which is a subject entry, and the typing of added subject entries where appropriate would, it seems, make this an extremely useful finding aid. The manual directive that finding aids should ignore format, is well-considered. A researcher is interested in information about a subject, after all, and the form it appears in has nothing to do with content.

A particular problem of the newspaper project staff, in listings of newspapers on microfilm, is the incompleteness or bad condition of some issues. They recognize what they call the possibility of a "nightmare" for the researcher--that just the issue he needs may be the damaged one--but insist that a complete statement of omissions or damages would be an impossible task.

After accessioning, microfilm must be stored and while specific information about North Carolina's storage of microfilm is not available,

it can be assumed that North Carolina archivists share the concern about aging blemishes which began in 1963 to be discovered on microfilm stored from two to 20 years. These spots have made a widely scattered appearance. The fact that no film processed and stored by the National Archives has been subject to these blemishes suggests that they are avoidable if correct procedures are followed in the handling of microfilm. C.S. McCamy of the National Bureau of Standards has summarized the research through 1965,[4] and outlined tentative recommedations for avoiding the blemishes. While no definite conclusions about causes had been reached at that time, the blemishes seemed to be associated with careless processing or storage. Low temperature and humidity seemed to be desirable, with the use of aluminum alloy cans rather than cardboard boxes if possible. Since spotting had not appeared on positive copies, these were recommended for security. McCamy recommended inspection of systematically-selected samples every two years. When there are two copies, security is greatly increased by storage in different places. None of these recommendations were definite, as no final conclusions about the blemishes had been reached. Nor did all the recommendations agree with existing standards for microfilm storage established by the American Standards Association, as these standards had been established in 1957, before blemishes had been discovered.

When microfilming is done for its security value, in order to serve researchers, or to preserve unique and otherwise unobtainable material, cost might prevent the filming being accomplished, but is certainly not the primary consideration in deciding whether to microfilm or not. North Carolina is gathering a uniquely complete set of newspapers for research and this, not economy, is the primary goal. Unfortunately, the budget of the newspaper project has not been separated from the Department of Archives' budget, so

the cost of building this collection is not available from biennial reports. The local records microfilming project costs $100,000 annually, as stated earlier. Both these projects, it should be noted, are done to provide unique research collections and for security purposes. Neither was undertaken as simply a space-saving measure.

For valuable research materials, the question of cost may become a question of which is the most economical kind of copy to make--which type will be most economical to send to a researcher who needs the material or what is the best means of preserving documents in the face of their impending disintegration. Microcopying is less costly than older methods of providing copies such as photostats and full-sized photographic prints. Microfiche is more economical than microfilm only when material is suitable and the expensive camera equipment is available.

Leisinger, in Microphotography for Archives, suggests that an advantageous archival use of microfiche might be the production of an archives' own manuals and pamphlets, as well as publication of pamphlet-length holdings. He does not explain how the high cost of the camera equipment could be justified for such limited use. Cost would seem to be prohibitive unless some central agency undertook such a project. High cost of microfiche may be enough to discourage archival use, but in addition, uniform size of documents is required, and archival documents often are not of uniform size. Nor are the high reduction ratios used in microfiche suitable for many archival materials. Roll microfilm therefore continues to be the most flexible and economical for archival use.

When microfilming is undertaken as primarily a space-saving technique, cost should be carefully considered. Only a few writers are concerned with

the kind of cost comparison that is meaningful in making a decision about microfilming as a means of saving space, that is, a comparison of microfilming with the costs of storing the existing materials. The dearth of published information is understandable. Costs vary from one locale to another, from one year to the next. They vary according to the kinds of materials to be microfilmed and the condition in which the materials are found can make a tremendous difference. Anyone who contemplated publishing, would probably be afraid his material would be too soon outdated and might prove unreliable for some purposes. North Carolina gives a figure of $28.00 per cubic foot and recommends microfilming only if records are to be kept more than 35 years. H.R. Verry, in his book Microcopying Methods provides a formula for estimating the costs of preparation and storage of microfilm in comparison with the cost of storage of the original documents. (pp 127-136) One suspects the accuracy of his conslusion that microfilming saves money within five years, though whether this is the fault of his formula or the use of inaccurate figures is difficult to determine. Verry was English, his figures are given in British monetary units, the formula is complex and this writer can barely balance a check book. For a more mathematically enlightened individual, Verry's analysis might be an interesting one to examine.

The most complete analysis of the cost of microfilming records as compared to costs of storing the originals, is the Oregon State Archives publication, Make Room for Records. This paper compares microfilming of different-sized document in varying condition (e.g. stapled or not), with storage costs of records stored in various containers and in both offices and storage. The charts graphically point out factors which must be considered in making a decision of whether to microfilm or not, and is not less valuable

because the precise figures may be dated or imprecise for other locales. Not included in the cost of microfilming in that report, is any indication of the cost of storing microfilm, which may cost more than storing and servicing the bulkier originals, because of the need for controlled air and continued periodic examination.[5]

As already mentioned, microfilming to provide copies for research purposes, must often be done in spite of a relatively high cost. Once the microfilming is accomplished, the archivist's concern with it centers on making it as widely available for use as is possible. The concern becomes providing adequate finding aids to microfilmed materials. Unfortunately, there is not much information available concerning North Carolina's descriptive practices and finding aids beyond the shelf-list catalog card described earlier. Nor is information available about descriptive practices as generally used for microfilm.

North Carolina has published a bibliography of its newspaper holdings, North Carolina Newspapers on Microfilm: a Checklist of Early North Carolina Newspapers Available on Microfilm from the State Department of Archives and History (3d edition, 1965) was the informative, if lengthy, title. This lists newspapers filmed from 1959 through 1965, and the list is supplemented in the biennial reports. It will be noted that this finding aid is limited to newspaper holdings in one form--microfilm--despite the instruction noted earlier, that finding aids should be prepared to subject matter without regard to form.

Though there are catalogs available for many of the materials available on microform, there has only recently been an attempt to provide bibliographic

control that compares with the National Union Catalog or National Union Catalog of Manuscript Collections. The National Register of Microform Masters offers the most complete list of microforms available. This list is of masters only, from which single copies may be purchased, and the masters must conform to Library of Congress specifications for completeness, collation, image placement, reduction ratio and targets. The scope covered includes foreign and domestic books, pamphlets, serials, foreign doctoral dissertations which are reported as held by 23 American libraries, 8 library associations, and by United States and foreign microform publishers. Newspapers which are listed in Newspapers on Microfilm are not included, nor are technical reports, typescript translations, United States doctoral dissertations, United States masters' theses, or foreign or domestic archival manuscript collections. There is no indication of the location of the original materials from which films were made.[6] Arrangement of the National Register of Microform Masters is in three parts. The first part lists books by Library of Congress catalog card number, the second lists monographs for which there are no Library of Congress catalog card numbers, while the third section lists serial publications alphabetically by main entry.[7]

University Microfilms lists out-of-print books for which it holds microfilm masters and of which it will produce print-outs on demand. In 1961, Richard W. Hale compiled a Guide to Photocopied Historical Materials in the United States and Canada. This guide provides basic bibliographic information on photocopied materials which are of interest to historians and available in depositories in the United States and Canada. This information includes the location of the original material.[8] The National Union Catalog of Manuscript Collections "generally excludes collections consisting entirely of photocopies located in the United States unless originals are not available to researchers."[9]

Other information about availability of microforms comes from individual institutions themselves, in special guides to their microfilm holdings, or in general guides to their collections, from which requests can be made for specific filming. The United States National Historical Publications Commission's Guide to Archives and Manuscripts in the United States provides information about filming facilities in the despositories it covers.[10]

Judging from an article by Clifford K. Shipton, "The Archivist and Service,"[11] which describes the numerous errors he has encountered both as user and supplier of microfilms produced on this "demand" system, quality control of microfilm preparation could be improved. Shipton states that in obtaining microfilm from 500 institutions, only two have never made an error which necessitated extra correspondence.

If individual institutions encounter this much difficulty in producing standardized high quality microfilms, perhaps the program established by the New York Public Library deserves some attention.[12] By contract, the 3M Company microfilms materials held by the New York Public Library and makes copies available for purchase to researchers and educational organizations. Beginning with permission to reproduce 25,000 existing reels of microfilm, the 3M Company can film additional materials, always giving one negative to the library. George L. Shaefer of the New York Public Library spoke of this program as originating in a sense of "a major social and moral responsibility to make these materials available to as many people as possible...Now researchers will be able to spend more time in studying and evaluating materials than in locating them."[13] One of the first projects under the contract was the filming of a rich and unique Afro-American collection. Certainly this subject, of particular interest at this time, is one in which resource materials need to be disseminated more rapidly than conventional publication makes possible.

Admittedly, not every archival institution or library has either the New York Public Library's collection, or its autonomy to contract with a commercial firm, but perhaps a similar arrangement could be employed to increase the availability of materials which either are already in microform, or could be useful to scholars if available in microform. A commercial firm engaged in filming and distribution by contract with various institutions, or a cooperative agency established by the institutions, might be able to produce higher quality, more uniform microfilms at lower cost.

Footnotes

1 Patterson, A.M., "Records Management in North Carolina Local Government," Records Management Journal, Autumn 1966, p12.

2 North Carolina Department of History and Archives, Newspaper Microfilming Project 1959-1969, typewritten report.

3 Carmichael, Leonard, "Reading and Visual Fatigue," Science, v106,no.3765, as reported in Verry, H.R., Microcopying Methods.

4 McCamy, C.S., "Current Research on Archival Microfilm," National Microfilm Association 1965 Convention Proceedings, vXIV,pps 61-72.

5 Leisinger, A.H., Microphotography for Archives (Washington 1968), p.83.

6 Library of Congress, National Register of Microform Masters, (annual), preface.

7 Sheehy, Eugene P., Guide to Reference Books (Chicago 1968) p.3.

8 Hale, Richard W., Guide to Photocopied Historical Materials in the United States and Canada (Ithaca 1961), preface.

9 National Union Catalog of Manuscript Collections, 1959, preface.

10 Winchell, Constance M., Guide to Reference Books (Chicago 1967), p.476.

11 Shipton, Clifford K., "The Archivist and Service," NMA Journal, January 1969, pps 127-128.

12 Schaefer, George L., "Microfilm's New Rôle at the New York Public Library," National Microfilm Association Proceedings (Annapolis 1968) pps317-320.

13 Schaefer, p320.

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